REMARKS

Claim Disposition

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. The Examiner has rejected claims 1-24. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 15, and 23 have been amended.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Krivoshein U.S. Patent No. 6,449,715 B1 hereinafter referred to as Krivoshein. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 has been amended to include a limitation that *each of the plurality of producer devices including* **independent** *configuration information protocol* **without a** *central configuration information repository*. As such, each of the producer devices can have unique configuration information in comparison to all other producer devices. This is a limitation not taught by Krivoshein as Krivoshein clearly specifies that the configuration information be kept in a central configuration information repository referred to as a ***common configuration database*** (col. 5, lines 39-49):

> *A process control configuration system integrates the configuration and documentation of devices connected to a control network using local I/O protocols, such as 4-20 ma, and HART protocols or specialized protocols, such as the Fieldbus protocol, with the configuration and documentation of devices connected to the control system using a remote I/O protocol, such as the Profibus and the AS-Interface communication protocols, to thereby enable the control system to communicate with and control different types of field devices using different communication protocols based on a **common configuration database**.*

Krivoshein after specifying that the communication protocols be based on a ***common configuration database*** continues to refer to this ***common configuration database*** as ***the same database*** (col. 5, lines 55-63):

> *The remote I/O device information, which may include information pertaining to the signals associated with each of the remote I/O devices, including user assigned signal tags or path names, is stored in **the same***

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> *database* as information pertaining to other devices within the process
> control system, including devices which are connected to the system using
> local or specialized I/O.

Referring to *the same database* again Krivoshein describes a perceived advantage of integrating remote I/O devices with local I/O devices through use of *the same database* (col. 6, Lines 17-22):

> *Still further, the configuration system automatically integrates the*
> *documentation of remote I/O devices with local or specialized I/O devices*
> *because it uses* ***the same database*** *to store information pertaining to the*
> *all of the devices connected to the system, whether they are connected via*
> *a local I/O device, a specialized I/O device or a remote I/O device.*

Krivoshein, therefore, clearly sees using a *common database* as an advantage and as such teaches away from a system *without* a central configuration information repository as is claimed in the instant application. Without Krivoshein disclosing, teaching or even suggesting a system without a central configuration repository an anticipation rejection is improper and should be withdrawn. Independent Claims 15 and 23 have also been amended to include a limitation that the configuration information is stored in the producer devices and is not from a central configuration repository. As discussed in the foregoing, this limitation is not found in Krivoshein and therefore independent Claims 15 and 23 are allowable as well.

Claims 2-14, 16-22, and 24 are all dependent either directly or indirectly from the allowable independent Claims 1, 15 and 23 and are therefore also allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 4 and 6 have also been amended by the addition of the element *the second configuration being* ***unique*** *in comparison to configurations of all other producer devices.* As such the producer device includes configuration information that is not included in any other device including a *common configuration database*. Since Krivoshein clearly requires that a *common configuration database* have all the configuration information stored therein Krivoshein cannot anticipate Claims 4 and 6 and an anticipation rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 15 and 23 have been amended to include the elements of, ***automatically*** transmitting the configuration information *stored in the producer device that is not from a central configuration repository from the producer device* to the consumer device via the network *in response to receiving the request from the consumer device.* By including that the

producer device *automatically* transmits the configuration information in response to receiving the request from the consumer device Claims 15 and 23 are distinguished over Krivoshein. Krivoshein specifies that a request be received by a *user interface*, thus requiring a human to interact with the user interface to initiate transmittal of the requested information back to the requesting device. Support for this is found in Krivoshein column 14 lines 24-28, which states: *the user input routine 74 prompts a **user** to input, via one of the workstations 14, all of the information needed to configure and communicate with each of the different devices within each of the device networks...* Additional support is found in column 13 lines 46-56:

> *the user input routine 74 may also be invoked whenever the documentation routine 78 is used to make a change to the configuration of the process control system 10, such as by adding a device or changing a device. When invoked, the user **input routine 74 automatically prompts the user for the information** needed to configure a device or a device network to establish communication or enable communication between a field device and a controller or other device during runtime of the process control system 10 and to document that configuration.*
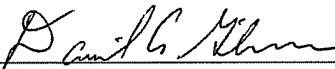
The automatic response of a producer device is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Krivoshein. As such an anticipation rejection of Claims 15 and 23 is improper and the rejections should be withdrawn.

It is believed that the foregoing remarks are fully responsive to the Office Action and that the claims herein should be allowable to the Applicants. In the event the Examiner has any queries regarding the instantly submitted response, the undersigned respectfully request the courtesy of a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully Submitted,

CANTOR COLBURN LLP

By _____

Daniel A. Gilmour

Date: February 26, 2007

Registration No. 59,059
55 Griffin Road South
Bloomfield, CT 06002
Telephone: (860) 286-2929
Facsimile: (860) 286-0115
Customer No. 23413